

sector workers—restaurant workers are among the worst paid, worst treated within the economy as a whole.

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While non-restaurant private sector workers make a median hourly wage of \$18, restaurant workers earn a median hourly wage of \$10, including tips. The results are predictable in that more than 16 percent of restaurant workers live below the poverty line.

This picture is made even worse by how it is skewed along race and gender lines. The highest paid positions in restaurants tend to be held by men and people who are White while the lowest paid positions are typically held by women and people of color. At the bottom of the ladder are undocumented workers, who comprise over 15 percent of the restaurant workforce, more than twice the rate for non-restaurant sectors.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way. There are forward-thinking restaurant owners who are choosing the high road, restaurants where conscious efforts are made to break down gender and ethnic divisions and that choose to pay a living wage with good benefits.

If you ask them, the owners of these establishments will tell you that they choose this path because it is not only the right thing to do, but it is also the smart thing to do financially. They choose this path because it is a solid business model that improves the chances of success in a highly competitive industry.

I am proud to represent one of those restaurants in my district. The Haymarket Cafe in Northampton, Massachusetts, has led the way for almost a quarter century in treating its employees with respect and in paying them a living wage.

I attended an event a couple of weeks ago at the Haymarket Cafe at which the owner, Peter Simpson, announced that his restaurant was moving to a \$15 per hour minimum wage and would be eliminating tips. Now, I have known Peter for a long time, and I was not surprised that he would take such a step.

Peter opened the Haymarket with his brother, David, almost 25 years ago. From the beginning, they were committed to paying a fair wage and in creating a positive work environment for their employees. In talking to Peter, I realized that his decision, while it reflected his idealism, was rooted in hard-nosed business sense.

You don't survive and thrive for a quarter century in the highly competitive restaurant industry, especially in a small, tight-knit community like Northampton, if your business model isn't airtight. Every decision you make has to make sense financially in order to succeed and stay competitive.

The decision to go to a \$15 per hour minimum wage and eliminate tips was not something Peter took lightly. He did his homework. He looked at other

restaurants in other cities that had made a similar move. He talked to all of his employees. He worked closely with the Pioneer Valley Workers Center, which is leading the charge to better the lives of low-wage immigrant workers in western Massachusetts.

Eliminating tips allowed Peter to make the wages between better paid waiters and less well-paid kitchen staff more equitable. It allowed his wait staff to earn a wage they could count on, rather than having to depend on the tipping whims of customers. It also gave him increased staffing flexibility, as he could train all of his staff to do all jobs so he could more easily shift people around when necessary. In committing to a \$15 per hour minimum wage, Peter also increased staff loyalty while decreasing turnover and training costs.

As a result of Peter's bold decision, the Haymarket Cafe has been overwhelmed by an outpouring of support. Staff and customers are equally enthusiastic, and business has jumped. This commitment to wage equity has shown, once again, to be a sound business strategy and has shown that a business based on such principles can provide a decent living for its staff and can contribute to the economic health of the community.

Mr. Speaker, the Haymarket Cafe is living proof, especially in an industry with such a dismal track record on wages, that paying a living wage is good for business and that a commitment to wage equity makes financial sense. The restaurant industry can and must do better, and I am proud to say the Haymarket Cafe is leading the way.

#### PRESIDENT OBAMA'S EXECUTIVE ACTION ON THE SECOND AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the President took aim at our Second Amendment rights.

We know his purpose was to restrict the constitutional right of law-abiding citizens. It will undermine our personal privacy rights. It will make it to where due process is taken away from many of our citizens, but it won't stop criminals from carrying firearms. As a father and as a grandfather, my heart is broken over the many tragedies and attacks that have occurred around this Nation, but this won't cure the problem.

In this Congress, we must fight for the rights of our Constitution. We must also use the courts to fight for those rights. We must do more.

Mr. Speaker, not only I, but you and every Member of this Congress, took an oath of office when we took these positions. We took that oath, and it was to uphold and to defend the Constitution, all of the Constitution, not just the First Amendment, but the Second Amendment as well and every part thereof.

When I took that oath, I took it very, very seriously. I am doing my part. I am upholding the oath that I took. I believe the President should uphold his.

#### HONORING DR. SHARON ELLIOTT-BYNUM, A TRAILBLAZER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my condolences on the passing of a giant in the Durham, North Carolina, community, a trailblazer, one who dedicated her life to improving health outcomes for disadvantaged citizens, including veterans.

This trailblazer, Mr. Speaker, was my friend, Dr. Sharon Elliott-Bynum. Sharon passed away on Sunday, January 3, at the young age of 58, 2 days before her 59th birthday.

We lost this giant far too soon, but not before she revolutionized the delivery of care for those in need through the founding of Durham's first free-standing, comprehensive healthcare clinic, called Healing with CAARE.

My first visit as Durham's Congressman was an enlightening visit to CAARE. I saw Sharon at work, I saw paid staff, and I saw dozens of community volunteers. We mourn this tremendous loss, but we also celebrate Sharon's remarkable life, which was replete with the success that many can only hope to achieve.

Born in Durham, Sharon Elliott-Bynum was a graduate of Northern High School, Durham Technical Institute, the Watts School of Nursing, and my alma mater, North Carolina Central University. She also received a master's degree and a Ph.D. from Victoria International College.

Sharon was a dedicated member of a great sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. As a member of the Durham Alumnae Chapter, founded in 1931, she led by example. Sharon was also a member of the National Council of Negro Women, of Sigma Theta Tau International, of the Top Ladies of Distinction, and of many more service organizations. Finally, she was a faithful member of the Faith Assembly Christian Center in Durham.

Dr. Elliott-Bynum was attracted to the field of nursing when she, at the age of 16, began volunteering at the historic Lincoln Community Health Center. Sharon's volunteerism motivated her to pursue a nursing career. So, in 1995, Dr. Elliott-Bynum and her late sister, Patricia—"Pat" she called her—founded Healing with CAARE, Inc.

What began as a nonprofit, community-based provider of services for individuals who were living with HIV expanded to being the primary healthcare home for more than 1,000 individuals who live with cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. CAARE